



News Release

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Sierra National Forest District Ranger David Martin Retires with 41 Years of Service

Clovis, CA— When asked at a recent interview where he sees the needs of the agency, District Ranger David Martin was emphatic about his staff and Forest Service employees in general “continuing to develop professional and technical expertise in your chosen field and to keep growing since a great deal of our credibility with our partners and the public comes from our quality knowledge base; that’s where we are believable.” Ranger Dave, as he is affectionately known, stressed that the focus of the agency and Forest should be to interface more with our stakeholders since “we work for them” and we need to “build those relationships.” Ranger Martin’s message to his staff can be summed up as “spend more time looking out” and his message to the public is clearly that “we need your support to sustain and improve the Forest” and “we have to make it compelling to them so that they demand to be involved in what we are doing.”

Ranger Martin sees potential for continuing to make progress toward ecological restoration of our forests by partnering with local and State entities that realize the need to support federal lands management because “this is where the water comes from.” The Bass Lake Ranger District staff provided technical expertise to the Sierra Resource Conservation District, Sierra Nevada Conservancy and TSS Consultants, who recently submitted a concept proposal to CalFire’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. With the California Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Fund, the State is poised to fund forestry projects which reduce or avoid GHG emissions for projects to improve forest health, reduce wildfire vegetation (fuel) hazards, increase carbon sequestration in conifer forests, reforest degraded lands, and develop programmatic planning efforts. The goal of this initiative is to ensure California’s forests continue to be significant carbon storage “sinks” and to reduce or avoid GHG emissions due to pest damage and damaging wildfires. This funding, if secured, would assure the availability of biomass feedstock for the first few years of the North Fork bioenergy project’s operations and further the development of a long-term stewardship contract. This will help guarantee future feedstock for the bioenergy facility, as well as provide ongoing revenue for forest treatment work.

“These initiatives will bring more money into the equation for National Forests which have a tremendous potential for carbon sequestration or prevention of carbon loss by preventing uncharacteristically severe wildfire,” according to Martin. Ranger Martin emphasizes the need to pay attention to these kinds of opportunities “as many of our partners are ahead of us and want to work with the Forest Service to tap into these opportunities. Unfortunately, we are falling behind since we can’t guarantee any matching funds the way we are currently structured”. He strongly feels we need to be more strategic with our planning so we continue to be efficient in how we spend our allocated funds to better leverage resources to meet our goals.

After 14 years as the District Ranger for the Bass Lake Ranger District in North Fork, California, Ranger Martin plans to stay engaged with the Forest Plan Revision process and conservation strategy for Pacific fisher, a species recently proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act. He will also continue to follow developments with the North Fork Bioenergy Facility and the Sustainable Forests and Communities Collaborative, a group that supports efforts that promote a healthy sociological system of forests, watersheds and economies in the communities of the South Central Sierra.

Some highlights for the Bass Lake Ranger District under Ranger Dave’s leadership include promotion of the Sierra Vista Scenic Byway, successfully obtaining grant funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to support hazardous fuels reduction in Nelder Grove and meadow restoration in the Willow Creek watershed. The District was integral in obtaining grant funding through Proposition 84 for restoration work in key watersheds to improve water quality and quantity through the Madera Region’s Integrated Regional Water Management Grant. Ranger Dave was critical to the success of the Willow Creek Planning Collaborative which resulted in an updated Landscape Analysis which led to a successful ecological restoration planning project known as Whisky Ridge Ecological Restoration Project, which won the Pacific Southwest Region’s 2013 Regional Forester's Award for All Lands, Watershed & Forest Health. Ranger Dave has also supported the North Fork Bioenergy Facility, the Sustainable Forests and Communities Collaborative along with being key to the collaborative effort behind the Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project. The District assisted with the emergency response and post-fire rehabilitation efforts related to the French Fire. To top it off the Bass Lake Ranger District was selected as the Pacific Southwest Region’s 2014 Regional Forester's Award for District of the Year awarded in December, 2014.

Dave plans to spend more time with his wife, Diane, whom he has been married to for 40 years. Dave also plans to spend more time with his grandchildren, Ava and Bodie and more time fishing is on the horizon. Dave and Diane live in North Fork, California and plan to remain in the area. Ranger Dave retires today with 41 years of service with the Forest Service working on the Inyo, Stanislaus and Sierra National Forests.

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